

Tobacco and Behavioral Health: The Issue and Resources

As overall smoking rates have declined, the prevalence of smoking among people with behavioral health conditions (mental and/or substance use disorders) has remained high. Although people with behavioral health conditions represent about 25 percent of the U.S. adult population, they account for nearly 40 percent of all cigarettes smoked. This disparity is causing serious health consequences.

Smoking also appears to interfere with behavioral health. A growing body of research shows that quitting smoking can improve mental health and addiction recovery outcomes. For example, studies show that:

- Quitting smoking can decrease depression, anxiety, and stress.
- Quitting smoking can increase positive mood and quality of life.
- For persons in treatment for substance use disorders, smoking cessation can increase long-term abstinence from alcohol and other drugs.

Research also shows that many smokers with behavioral health conditions want to quit, can quit, and benefit from proven smoking cessation treatments.

Based on this research, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recommends the adoption of tobacco-free facility/grounds policies and the integration of tobacco treatment into behavioral healthcare.

SAMHSA REPORTS

- [Smoking Rate among Adults with Serious Psychological Distress Remains High](#)
- [Adults with Mental Illness or Substance Use Disorder Account for 40 Percent of All Cigarettes Smoked](#)
- [About 1 in 4 Mental Health Treatment Facilities Offered Services to Quit Smoking](#)
- [The N-SSATS Report: Tobacco Cessation Services](#)
- [The NSDUH Report: Smoking and Mental Illness](#)
- [Nicotine Dependence among Persons Who Received Substance Use Treatment](#)
- [SAMHSA Advisory | Tobacco Use Cessation Policies in Substance Abuse Treatment: Administrative Issues](#)
- [SAMHSA Advisory | Tobacco Use Cessation During Substance Abuse Treatment Counseling](#)

RESOURCES

- [The Smoking Cessation Leadership Center's \(SCLC's\) behavioral health web page](#) has presentations, publications, toolkits, factsheets, and more.
- [Smoking Cessation Leadership Center – Leadership & Policy Academies](#) for smoking cessation in behavioral health.
- [National Behavioral Health Network for Tobacco & Cancer Control](#) serves as a resource hub for organizations, healthcare providers, and public health professionals seeking to combat tobacco and cancer disparities among individuals with mental illnesses and addictions.

- [University of Colorado Behavioral Health and Tobacco Toolkits](#)
- [New York State Department of Health Tobacco Control Program training/technical assistance website](#) to support the requirement for chemical dependence service programs to implement tobacco-free environment policies and to provide tobacco dependence education and treatment interventions.
- [New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services provider training and resources webpage](#) to support the requirement for chemical dependence service programs to implement tobacco-free environment policies and to provide tobacco dependence education and treatment interventions.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a quit smoking media campaign featuring [Rebecca, a former smoker, whose depression and quality of life improved after quitting.](#)
- NIH videocast: [Helping Smokers With Behavioral Health Comorbidity Requires a National Effort](#)

KEY RESEARCH: Tobacco Cessation and Mental Health

- [Does smoking cessation result in improved mental health?](#) (2015)
- [Premature mortality among adults with schizophrenia in the United States](#) (2015)
- [Tobacco Use and Suicide Attempt](#) (2015)
- [Change in mental health after smoking cessation: systematic review and meta-analysis](#) (2014)
- [Smoking cessation is associated with lower rates of mood/anxiety and alcohol use disorders](#) (2014)
- [Efficacy of initiating tobacco dependence treatment in inpatient psychiatry](#) (2014)
- [From the sidelines to the frontline: how the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration embraced smoking cessation](#) (2014)
- [Persistent heavy smoking as risk factor for major depression incidence](#) (2012)
- [Smoking and Mental Illness — Breaking the Link](#) (2011)

KEY RESEARCH: Tobacco Cessation and Substance Use Treatment/Recovery

- [Cigarette Smoking and Risk of Alcohol Use Relapse Among Adults in Recovery from Alcohol Use Disorders](#) (2015)
- [The integration of tobacco dependence treatment and tobacco-free standards into residential addictions treatment in New Jersey](#) (2015)
- [Smoking cessation is associated with lower rates of mood/anxiety and alcohol use disorders](#) (2014)
- [A meta-analysis of smoking cessation interventions with individuals in substance abuse treatment or recovery](#) (2004)
- [The impact of smoking cessation on drug abuse treatment outcome](#) (2003)
- [Mortality following inpatient addictions treatment. Role of tobacco use in a community-based cohort](#) (1996)